

MEDREGION UPDATE

Regional Office Tunis

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MEPI in 2009— apply for a grant!

- The Tunis Regional Office has around \$2 million to support grants in the region.
- Details on how to apply can be found on page three or with your local MEPI committee.
- Make this the year to become involved with your community...and MEPI activities!

MEPI RO Tunis Celebrates its Fifth Anniversary

On the 18th of August, the Middle East Partnership Initiative Regional Office (MEPI RO) in Tunis will celebrate its Fifth year anniversary. Established in 2004 under the auspices of the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs at the U.S. Department of State, the MEPI RO in Tunis is one of two regional offices created to better promote MEPI's objectives in the region by working directly with its local partners.

Currently, the MEPI RO in Tunis administers Local Grants programs in Algeria,



Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia, and the Palestinian Territories.

Since its conception, the MEPI RO in Tunis has witnessed significant

increases in its operations. Its allotment for Local Grants increased from \$482,859 for fiscal year (FY) 2004 to \$1,876,694 for FY2007.

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MEPI Meets Tomorrow's Leaders

A pre-departure orientation session for five Tunisian students taking part in MEPI's Tomorrow's Leaders scholarship program was held in Amideast Tunis on August 3, 2009. The Tomorrow's Leaders Scholarship Program is a MEPI-funded program for capable and highly motivated high school seniors from underserved communities in the Middle East and North Africa.

The program offers to students, who have the potential to become leaders, four-year university scholarships and internship opportunities *(continued on page 2)*



The Pre-departure orientation session for students departing on Tomorrow's Leaders Scholarship Program

Claudia Abi Nader: “A Leader is Someone Who Dedicates Oneself to One’s Society”

Congratulations to Claudia Abi Nader for being featured as alumna of the month for June on State Department Alumni Website.

Lebanese Citizens Exchange alumna Dr. Claudia Abi Nader has worked to improve the image of the Lebanese businesswoman. Returning home from her citizen exchanges program in 2001, which focused on the role of women as leaders in organizations, Abi Nader has conducted hundreds of international seminars and workshops to promote the role of women in society and the importance of cultural exchange and civic education. She has dedicated

herself to sharing her message that “a leader is someone who dedicates oneself to one’s society.”



Dr. Claudia Abi Nader

Abi Nader resolved to bring this message home to Lebanon.

After participating in a USA

exchange program, Abi Nader returned to Lebanon with a strong will to transfer what she had experienced in the United States: “I learned how to express my will, to reach my targets, to better serve my community .

In 2005, she was nominated to be the vice president of the League of Lebanese Business Women, in charge of the cultural committee. The League works to empower Lebanese women in business and is the Lebanese chapter of the Arab Business Women’s League.

Through a variety of media outlets, Abi Nader has taken advantage of the opportunity

“I learned how to express my will, to reach my targets, to better serve my community .

to

promote awareness and positively impact society.

From 2005 to 2008, she hosted popular radio shows including “Where Are You?”, which is a weekly show on Tele Lumiere about working women in different fields [e.g. architects, lawyers, doctors, judges] and how they are involved and responsible for building a healthy society.

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at the American University of Beirut (AUB), the Lebanese American University (LAU), and the American University for Cairo (AUC).

Tomorrow’s Leaders is a pioneering scholarship program that embodies a high quality academic program, leadership-building activities, civic engagement opportunities, and community service involvement.

Marwen Mechergui one of the students, states that “What’s important and exciting about this program is that it offers an academic curriculum that focuses on instilling leadership skills as

well as inciting students to be involved in community service activities and volunteering which help develop social skills.”

The program encourages students to be the driving force to bring about change in their respective countries. “I want to change the world”, said Mechergui. He went on to add that, “the program will be giving us the tools and showing us the ways to be leaders, each in his or her own field”. Hanen Keskes, who chose to major in political sciences at the AUB, reinforced Mechergui’s sentiment saying “this program will help me to pursue a higher quality



Tomorrow’s Leaders students

education as well as develop leadership skills and thus I will be able to serve my community once back home. It is a great opportunity.”

Sabri Bzizi, an English major student who is planning to pursue his

undergraduate studies in international affairs in LAU noted that “I consider myself very lucky to get a full scholarship to pursue my undergraduate studies.” He said “ I would otherwise never be able to afford it to study abroad”.



Middle East Partnership Initiative



Supporting Greater Opportunities throughout the Middle East and North Africa

The Office went from funding 18 projects in five countries in FY 2005 to 41 projects in six countries and the Palestinian Territories by FY 2008. For FY 2009, MEPI RO Tunis is expecting to fund 51 projects.

At a conference that convened in Alexandria, Egypt in 2006, a MEPI grant recipient from Morocco stated: "This conference not only gave me the chance to learn about

other MEPI projects, it also enabled me to better appreciate my own project and see how much I've achieved." Her project staged theatrical plays to teach the family code to people throughout her country, especially illiterate women who might not otherwise understand their legal rights. When asked about MEPI, an Egyptian lawyer whose project aimed at raising awareness about judicial accountability and

transparency in his country said: "such a program was so valuable to me. It featured real-life situations, with problems specific to our context, and proposed concrete solutions tailored to our resources."

There were those skeptical of MEPI's survival since the days of its formation and many are still uncertain about what lies in the future for MEPI. Yet the goals toward which MEPI works continue to be high priorities for the U.S. Government, as illustrated by remarks made by President Obama in a speech he recently delivered in Cairo: "The United States will partner with any Muslim-majority country to support literacy for girls, and to help young women pursue employment through micro-financing that helps people live their dreams...On education, we will expand

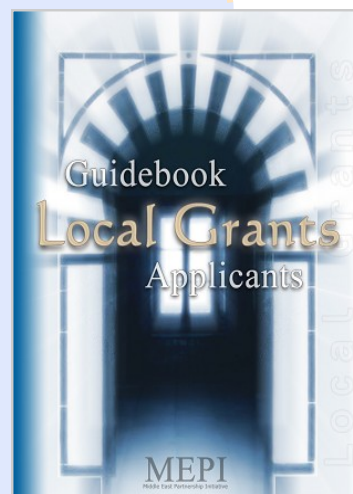
exchange programs, and increase scholarships...all these things must be done in partnership. Americans are ready to join with citizens and governments, community organizations, religious leaders and businesses in Muslim communities around the world to help our people pursue a better life." These comments resonate with the mission statement and the aims of MEPI. As we celebrate the 5th year anniversary of MEPI RO Tunis this August 18th, we do so welcoming the idea that MEPI RO Tunis will continue to play a significant role in implementing U.S. foreign policy in the region.



Submit your grant applications now!

Funding is available now for Local Grants. Please contact your country's U.S. Embassy MEPI Committee and see the guidebook available on our [website](http://www.medregion.mepi.state.gov) for step-by-step instructions in English and Arabic.

www.medregion.mepi.state.gov



The Strategic Framework: The Mission Statement

To be effective, every NGO should be able to define for itself a Mission Statement.

A Mission Statement provides the moral framework and set of values that distinguish one NGO from another. It clearly identifies the types of activities and programs delivered by the NGO and all the services which that organization provides. The mission statement also identifies the main targets or clients to receive these services.

Developing your own mission statement requires answering questions about your NGO.

MEPI's Mission Statement:

MEPI is at the forefront of U.S. efforts to advance democratic reform and vibrant, prosperous societies in the Middle East and North Africa. An integral part of U.S. policy, MEPI provides coordinated, tangible support and public commitment to local efforts throughout the Middle East and North Africa in the areas of women's empowerment, educational advancement, economic development, and political participation. Through timely, responsive and innovative approaches, MEPI projects provide critical assistance to local reformers as they lay the necessary institutional and legal foundations for sustainable economic and human growth.

An NGO's Mission Statement:

The Egyptian NGO Service Center (ENGOSC) Mission Statement:

♦ ENGOSC is a civil organization whose mission it is to work with non-governmental organizations in Egypt to strengthen their managerial, technical, and financial capacities and to help them perform an effective role as full partners with government and the private sector in socio-economic development.

To achieve this mission, the Center shall:

- Enhance the capacities of civil society organizations (CSOs);
- Mobilize new grant funding for civil society and develop effective new approaches to community resource mobilization;
- Increase civil society demand for organizational development assistance and then deliver technical assistance, training and consultative support to CSOs ;
- Stimulate civil society to greater civic action; and
- Improve civil society access to, and greater use of, information and knowledge for more effective practice of civic action and local development.



Middle East Partnership Initiative

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ABOUT MEPI:

The Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), located within the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs at the U.S. Department of State, assists efforts to expand political participation, strengthen civil society and the rule of law, empower women and youth, create educational opportunities, and foster economic reform throughout the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

MEPI Regional Office, Tunis

Housed at the U.S. Embassy in Tunis, administers MEPI local programs in Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia, and West Bank/Gaza, and accounts for around \$2 million in program funding each year. In addition to coordinating with U.S. Embassies throughout the region, the Tunis RO organizes conferences (such as the Business Women's Summit and Student Leaders Alumni Conference), facilitates exchange programs (such as the Leaders for Democracy Fellowship program and the Students Leaders program), and provides a variety of funding opportunities (such as the MEPI Local Grants program and Civil Society Grants), as well as supporting visits, seminars, and training programs designed to advance reform.

We are on the web!
www.medregion.mepi.state.gov